

OFF 'N' RUNNING

JPL Running Club Newsletter

February 1987

Vol. 3, No. 1

1987 CLUB OFFICERS

President	Sam Dolinar	238-420	4-7403
Vice-President	Joe Ferrall	125-112	4-3159
Treasurer	Jeff Berner	161-228	4-3934
Publicist	Jim Ulvestad	238-700	4-6734
Membership Sec.	Kathy O'Hara	190-220	4-2270

Congratulations (or condolences, as appropriate) are due the above officers. Note that Joe Ferrall has agreed to serve for only the first half of 1987, so a volunteer is needed to serve during the latter part of the year.

LETTER FROM THE NEW EDITOR

Many thanks to Valerie Pickett for getting this newsletter started and keeping it going for two years. I agreed to succeed her as newsletter editor only if I could use it to promote my own peculiar view of running. However, I would also like the newsletter to perform some useful function besides giving me a forum. I strongly encourage readers to comment on the format and to send in contributions. I'm especially interested in responses to my plans for the newsletter, as outlined below.

Unless otherwise requested, I do not plan to include the very extensive race listings that Valerie has published in the past. Listings are in every issue of *City Sports*, and races are also listed in the *Los Angeles Times* sports page in mid-week. I will try to have listings available, and possibly posted outside my office (238-741) if anyone cares and if I remember.

In the *Club News* section, I would like to include news about performances of club members in non-JPL races, and other bits of gossip. That section will last as long as I can keep people sending me news, or until I get tired of inventing it. **Please send contributions!**

I also intend to write a short column on various aspects of training or racing in each newsletter. This will be my effort to communicate methods and philosophy derived over a number of years in case there is any information useful to others.

Jim U. (238-700, 4-6734)

CLUB NEWS

Membership dues are \$3.00 and are due by the end of February. Please send them to Jeff Berner (161-228), and make checks payable to "ERC."

Bill Read ran a 2:33 at the Mission Bay Marathon in January. To my knowledge, this is the fastest marathon ever run by anyone while employed at JPL. Bill had planned to pace Steve Stedry, but Steve used his bicycle to attack a car in the weeks before the race and was unable to run.

JPL

A Forest Service work crew recently completed an extensive job of re-modelling the El Prieto Trail. This is a two-mile trail that goes from about 400 yards above the bottom of Brown Mountain Road to the fire road between Brown Mountain and Millard Canyon. It is runnable even by fairly inexperienced trail runners, though steep in some places. The trail has been opened up enough so that you should be able to see the snakes ahead of time during the summer, but you should stay alert anyway. Note that the open area with picnic tables that is located more than halfway up the trail is the site of the cabin that belonged to Jason and Owen Brown, sons of John Brown of Harper's Ferry fame. Owen Brown's grave is located on Little Round Top, east of the trail and near El Prieto Road.

The Los Angeles Marathon is on March 1 (see below). I have entry forms for 10 K's at Los Alamitos on February 21 and Playa Del Rey on March 8, as well as single copies of a variety of other race flyers.

Please report L.A. Marathon results for next month's newsletter.

PACING YOURSELF IN A MARATHON, (SUCH AS L.A.)

The most common failure in a marathon is probably the sin of going out too fast. This stems largely from two causes, excitement over being in the race and poor judgment about the pace you can maintain for the full distance. It is worth noting that the men's world records for the 10 km and marathon distances were run at 4:23 and 4:51 pace per mile; corresponding numbers for women are 4:52 and 5:23. *In each case*, the pace in the longer race is 10.6% slower than in the shorter race. These differentials are achieved by extremely strong, world-class athletes who run at least 100 miles per week, and few of us can match them. Therefore, you should expect a larger differential for your own running. For example, if you are a 45:00 10-K runner (7:15 pace), it makes *no sense* to try to run a marathon faster than 3:30 (8:00 pace) until you have improved your 10-K time somewhat. For the typical casual runner, a slowdown of at least 15% to 20% would be more realistic. In the case of the 45:00 10-K runner, this would correspond to a 3:39 to 3:48 marathon. A simple rule of thumb is that you should multiply your 10-K time by $4\frac{2}{3}$ to get the fastest possible marathon time, or by 5 to get a more realistic marathon time. For the hypothetical 45:00 10-K runner, this multiplication gives a fastest time of 3:30 and a more realistic time of 3:45.

Another word of advice is appropriate for pacing yourself in a very large race. It may take minutes to cross the starting line, and it is imperative that you not try to make up that time early in the race. If you plan to run the first half of the race in 1:50, and you take 4 minutes to cross the starting line, you should aim for 1:54 rather than 1:50 at the midpoint. *Starting later does not enable you to run faster once you've started.*

Even world-class runners almost invariably run the second half of a marathon slower than the first half. I typically run the second half about 2-3% slower than the first half; only one person has ever passed me in the second half of my eight competitive marathons and remained ahead of me to the finish. Therefore, if you really think you can run 3:40 (for instance), a halfway split of 1:48 is probably necessary to have a realistic chance of reaching your goal. It is reasonable for most people to expect a slowdown that is a minimum of 4% even if you're pacing yourself properly.